

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the third paragraph on page 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Linear surgical stapling devices, for example, include two elongated members which are relatively moveable to capture or clamp tissue. Typically one of the members includes a cartridge which houses a plurality of staples arranged in two or more linear rows and the other member includes an anvil having a plurality of staple forming pockets for receiving and forming the legs of the staples. A knife is movably positioned between the linear rows of staples such that when the stapling device is positioned about tissue and actuated, the tissue is joined and/or sealed is simultaneously or nearly simultaneously cut.--

Please replace the paragraph which bridges pages 1 and 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Linear surgical stapling devices are commonly used during surgical procedures to simultaneously seal and cut target tissue, e.g., vasculature, organs, etc. It is not uncommon during such procedures that certain tissue, e.g., vasculature or other ~~adherent~~ adherent, connective, joined or other tissue, adheres or is joined to the target tissue and must first be separated from the target tissue before the procedure can continue. Currently, a ~~separate surgical device~~ separate from the stapling device is used to dissect or separate the ~~certain, certain~~ tissue from the target tissue before the target tissue and/or the adherent certain tissue is operated upon. Also, it is a known practice to attach a guide or carrier tube to the distal end of the anvil and to use a separate instrument to pass the tube around the target tissue or structure. The tube is also used to move the back wall of the target tissue into the jaws of the ~~staple~~ stapling device. The

tube is removed after the ~~staple~~ stapling device is in proper position and then the ~~stapler~~ stapline device is fired. These procedures require extra steps and ~~device~~ devices and can be time consuming and expensive especially during endoscopic procedures.--

Please replace the second full paragraph on page 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Accordingly, a continuing need exists in the art for a device which can be used not only to join and cut tissue but also to separate or dissect certain, e.g., ~~adherent~~ adherent, tissue from target tissue.--

Please replace the paragraph which bridges pages 10 and 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Referring now to FIGS. 3-5, when surgical stapling device 10 is used to dissect certain tissue 40, e.g., blood or airway vessels, from target tissue 42, e.g., stomach, lung, etc., curved outer surface 14a of dissecting tip 14 can be pressed or passed against target tissue 42 and slid behind certain tissue 40, e.g., ~~adherent, tissue~~ adherent tissue, to separate and/or dissect tissue 40 from, for example, adherence with target tissue 42. Positioning of dissecting tip 14 behind certain tissue 40 is preferably accomplished with the anvil assembly 34 and cartridge assembly 36 in the open position. Alternately, the anvil and cartridge assemblies can be moved to the clamped position to provide extra stability to the end effector during dissection of tissue. Thereafter, either or both of certain tissue 40 and target tissue 42 can be independently joined and cut by clamping and actuating surgical stapling device 10.--

Please replace the second full paragraph on page 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--It is noted that although not described in detail, end effector 12 preferably is adapted to access the surgical site through a trocar cannula assembly as is known in the art. To accomplish this, anvil assembly 34 and cartridge assembly 36 are maintained in a clamped position as elongated body portion 18 and end effector 12 are inserted through the cannula (not shown). As illustrated, preferably, dissecting tip 14 does not extend below a plane defined by a bottom surface 36b of cartridge assembly 36, nor does dissecting tip 14 extend outwardly beyond the sidewalls of cartridge assembly 36. The dissecting tip can be positioned above, preferably slightly ~~above~~ above, the plane. As such, surgical stapling device 10 including dissecting tip 14 may be used with a trocar cannula assembly sized to receive a surgical stapling device not having a dissecting tip 14.--

Please replace the paragraph which bridges pages 11 and 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--FIGS. 6-6e illustrate another preferred embodiment of the presently disclosed dissecting tip shown generally as 114. Dissecting tip 114 is secured to the distal end of end effector 12. Alternately, dissecting tip 114 is can be monolithically or integrally formed with end effector 12. As discussed above, end effector 12 includes anvil assembly 34 and cartridge assembly 36. Dissecting tip 114 is secured to a distal surface or portion of anvil assembly 34 in the manner described above with respect to dissecting tip 14. Dissecting tip 114 is also constructed from a surgical grade metal or plastic and includes substantially flat inner and outer surfaces 114a and 114b and a rounded, blunt tip 114c. The use of other known surgically approved materials to

construct dissecting tip 114 is envisioned. Other tip configurations may also be employed. The outer edges 114d of outer surface 114b are preferably rounded to prevent snagging, and/or cutting of tissue. Inner surface 114a of dissecting tip 114 is preferably substantially parallel to and spaced from tissue guide surface 36a of cartridge assembly 36 when anvil assembly 34 and cartridge assembly 36 are in the clamped position. Distal tip 114c of dissecting tip 114 extends distally beyond the distal end of cartridge assembly 36 and decreases in width from its proximal end to its distal end. The width of the proximal end of dissecting tip 114 is smaller than the width of cartridge assembly 36 and distal tip 114c preferably does not extend below a plane defined by a bottom surface 36b of cartridge assembly 36. As such, a surgical stapling device including dissecting tip 114 can be inserted through a trocar cannula assembly sized to receive the stapling device.--